

too severe an erosion of the live racing requirement in order for a track to participate in simulcasting...interstate simulcasting, that is. But I think those of us that are involved with this issue realize that the industry is in trouble in Nebraska right now, and we have to take steps on several fronts in order to address the situation of a...of a horseracing industry that is looking at competition from a variety and ever-increasing number of forms of gaming. And LB 471 is one piece...one piece of the puzzle. And I think Senator Schellpeper and I, in particular, have been working very diligently with the groups representing the tracks, representing the people that run the horses in the State of Nebraska towards trying to reach some accommodations beyond the scope of this bill, including perhaps some guarantees as to the total number of days of racing that need to be run in the state, and perhaps some...some guarantees of the rights of the individuals that work at the racetracks as well. There's also a bill that's been advanced from the Revenue Committee, that I sponsored, dealing with the structure of the parimutuel tax that we'll be debating later on, on General File, that I think also is an important piece of the puzzle that I mentioned. With that, I would...I would urge your support for LB 471. I think those of us who aren't completely pleased with the bill are making a good faith effort here to cooperate with all elements of the industry and, for that reason, I would urge your support for the advancement of 471 to Select File. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Will. Senator Hohenstein.

SENATOR HOHENSTEIN: Madam President, members of the body, I rise in support of 471. And I just want to give you...give you a short illustration of how this works. In northeast Nebraska we've got one of the smallest racetracks, at Atokad. And, frankly, every day of live racing is a tremendous financial drain and a loser proposition. With simulcasting we have an opportunity to keep the live racing open. If, in fact,...we're probably at the hot bed of that pernicious influence that Senator Chambers has talked about, with respect to the lottery. We've got to compete with video lotteries, with the Iowa lotteries, with the riverboat gambling in the other states across our borders, and the only way that Atokad is going to be able to compete and stay alive is with this sort of provision that allows some diminution of the live racing in return for the ability to compete in simulcasting and actually make the money which keeps the track open. If, in fact, the live racing